

Message Text

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FOR UNDERSECRETARY SISCO FROM AMBASSADOR PORTER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, US, SA

SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE OF JANUARY 21, 1976

1. FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM YOUR IMPORTANT VOA "PRESS CONFERENCE" OF 21ST SCHEDULED FOR RELEASE JANUARY 24 WHICH I WILL BE PASSING TO FOREIGN MINISTER FOR HIS USE WITH CABINET. PLEASE NOTE THAT I HAVE STRIPPED AWAY BOILER PLATE AND TO INCREASE READABILITY HAVE REPRODUCED ONLY KEY REMARKS. ALSO, I HAVE ELIMINATED REFERENCES TO SOVIET ROLE AND VIEWS ON MIDDLE EAST OF WHICH SAUDIS ARE AWARE AND WHICH IT IS UNDESIRABLE TO EMPHASIZE LOCALLY. WE SHALL, OF COURSE, BE PROVIDING REGULAR SAUDI RECEIPIENTS WITH COMPLETE OFFICIAL TEXTS ON THE SCHEDULED RELEASE. BEGIN EXERPTS:

ELLIS: HOW MUCH CHANGE IN SC RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338 COULD UNITED STATES ACCPET WITHOUT VETO?

SISCO: WE DO NOT BELIEVE, MR. ELLIS, THAT THERE OUGHT TO BE CHANGE IN THAT FRAMEWORK.

ELLIS: DOES THE U.S. ENDORSE THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL REIGHTS FOR THE PALESTINIANS, AS THE ARABS THEMSELVES ARE PRESSING, AND AS MANY OTHER SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS NOW ENDORSE?

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SISCO: WHAT WE HAVE SAID TIME AND TIME AGAIN IS THAT FOR ANY JUST AND DURABLE PEACE TO BE ACHIEVED IN THE MIDDLE EAST THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIANS MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. WE HAVE ALWAYS FELT THAT THE PALESTINIAN ELEMENT MUST BE TAKEN FULLY INTO ACCOUNT IN THIS WAY. WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT OR TAKE AN INITIATIVE WITH A VIEW TO GETTING TOGETHER AN INFORMAL GROUP PRIOR TO A GENERAL CONFERENCE.

BARBER: WHO DO YOU SEE TAKING PART IN THAT INFORMAL GROUP? CAN WE GET A LITTLE BIT MORE PRECISE ABOUT THAT?

SISCO: OUR NOTION HAS ALWAYS BEEN THAT THE PRINCIPAL STATES CONCERNED WOULD GET TOGETHER. THAT COULD MEAN THE TWO CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, ISRAEL, EGYPT, JORDAN AND SYRIA AND IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE AT THAT PREPARATORY CONFERENCE FOR THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION TO BE DISCUSSED. BUT WE ARE QUITE OPEN-MINDED IN TERMS OF WHAT KIND OF GROUPING.

TREWHITT: HAVE YOU HAD ANY INDICATIONS FROM THE ISRAELI SIDE THAT THEY WOULD GO ALONG WITH SUCH A SCHEME?

SISCO: YOU RECALL THAT WHEN THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WAS ORIGINALLY PUT TOGETHER AND MET IN '73 ALL OF THEM AGREED THAT IN THE ACTUAL INVITATION AND ACCEPTING THE INVITATION TO THAT CONFERENCE THAT THE QUESTION OF ADDITIONAL PARTICIPATION WAS SOMETHING FOR THEM TO DECIDE.

TREWHITT: HOW DO YOU JUDGE THE SITUATION IN LEBANON AS FAR AS WE KNOW IT RIGHT NOW IN TERMS OF POTENTIAL FOR CAUSING ANOTHER MIDDLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EAST WAR?

SISCO: WE'RE AGAINST OUTSIDE INTERVENTION AND WE'RE AGAINST AND WOULD BE OPPOSED TO THE PARTITION OF LEBANON.

ELLIS: DO YOU RULE OUT OR DOES THE UNITED STATES RULE OUT ANOTHER UNILATERAL INTERVENTION

BY AMERICAN FORCES?

SISCO: YES, I THINK WE WOULD RULE THIS OUT. WE HAVE NO PLANS FOR DIRECT UNITED STATES INTERVENTION.

ELLIS: ISRAEL HAS BEEN BUILDING SETTLEMENTS IN A NUMBER OF THOSE SETTLEMENTS (GOLAN, WEST BANK, GAZA). WHAT IS THE UNITED STATES POSITION ON THESE SETTLEMENTS?

SISCO: WE HAVE MADE OUR VIEW VERY CLEAR TO THE ISRAELIS, BOTH PRIVATELY AND PUBLICLY AS WELL AS TO THE WORLD. WE HAVE HAD AND CONTINUE TO HAVE THE STRONGEST RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE NEW SETTLEMENTS, WHICH IN OUR JUDGEMENT TEND TO MAKE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT THE ACHIEVEMENT OF PEACE.

BARBER: THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN IN CONTACT AT LOW LEVELS WITH THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION.

SISCO: WE DO NOT HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANT CONTACT AT A POLITICAL AND POLICY LEVEL. WE HAVE HAD WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL TECHNICAL CONTACT IN THIS SENSE. A LOW LEVEL OFFICER AT THE U.N. MIGHT BUMP INTO A PALESTINIAN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS. BUT THERE HAVE BEEN NO POLITICAL CONTACTS OF ANY KIND.

END OF MESSAGE.
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